

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 15020 181514Z

41

ACTION AF-07

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2364

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

USLO PEKING

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR ET CH

SUBJ: CHINESE AMBASSADOR PRESENTS CREDENTIALS

REF: HONG KONG 13512

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.

1. ETHIOPIAN MEDIA REPORT YANG SHOU CHENG, NEW CHINESE AMBASSADOR, PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS DECEMBER 17 TO BG TEFERI BENTI, CHAIRMAN, ETHIOPIAN PROVISIONAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT (EPMG), AT THE NATIONAL PALACE (FORMERLY JUBILEE PALACE). YANG THUS BECOMES FIRST NEW AMBASSADOR TO PRESENT CREDENTIALS SINCE EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE'S FALL IN SEPTEMBER.

2. VIVID CEREMONY COMPLETE WITH PLAYING FOUNTAINS AND BODYGUARD HONORS REPORTEDLY ATTENDED BY EPMG REPS, MOD AYALEW MANDEFRO, MININT COL. BELACHEW JEMANEH, AND MOFA MINSTATE ARAYA OGBAGZY. AS HE PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS, YANG STATED THAT HE BROUGHT

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WARM GREETINGS OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT FOR THE

ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT. HE SAID ETHIOPIA AND CHINA, ASTHIRD WORLD DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ENGAGED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND COLONIALISM, HAVE MUCH IN COMMON.

3. IN HIS REPLY, BG TEFERI NOTED LONG-STANDING ETHIOPIAN-CHINESE FRIENDSHIP AND EFFORTS BOTH COUNTRIES WERE MAKING TO PROMOTE THE CAUSE OF WORLD PEACE AND SAFEGUARD THE DIGNITY OF MAN. HE EMPHASIZED ETHIOPIA'S DESIRE FOR PEACE AND BROTHERHOOD WITH ALL NATIONS, PARTICULARLY ITS IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS, AND ETHIOPIA'S RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLES OF THE UN AND OAU CHARTERS. TEFERI EXPRESSED THE GRATITUDE OF THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE FOR CHINESE UNDERSTANDING AND VALUABLE HELP. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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COMMENT: AS THE FIRST AMBASSADOR TO PRESENT CREDENTIALS TO THE EPMG, ETHIOPIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE EVENT WAS EXTENSIVE. ALTHOUGH YANG'S PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS COULD BE READ AS A SIGNIFICANT PRC STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE EPMG, IT IS ALSO QUITE POSSIBLE THAT YANG'S APPOINTMENT HAS BEEN IN TRAIN FOR SOME TIME AND THE CHINESE DECIDED TO COMPLETE THE PROCESS. ALTHOUGH RUMORS OF PRC INFLUENCE AND FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR THE EPMG ABOUND IN ADDIS, INDICATIONS AVAILABLE TO US THAT THE CHINESE MAY HAVE ALTERED THEIR PREVIOUS POLICY VIS-A-VIS ETHIOPIA OF DISCREET, LOW-KEY, AND CORRECT ACTIVITY REMAIN LIMITED AND INCONCLUSIVE AT PRESENT. IT IS EVIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRC APPEARS TO BE MORE COMFORTABLE WITH THE EPMG THAN THE ANCIEN REGIME. WE HEARD IN MID-NOVEMBER FROM AN UNTESTED ETHIOPIAN SOURCE THAT CHINESE AND YUGOSLAV EXPERTS HAD BEEN SOLICITED TO HELP THE EPMG ORGANIZE THE PROGRESS THROUGH COOPERATION CAMPAIGN. WE WILL BE WATCHING TO SEE WHETHER THE ACCREDITATION OF A NEW CHINESE AMBASSADOR IS FOLLOWED BY ACTION IN THIS AREA. IF SO, WE WOULD CONSIDER IT SIGNIFICANT.

WYMAN

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